

CONTACT FOR MEDIA: Roger Snell, communications director Ph: (502) 564-2664, fax 564-2669, e-mail: roger.snell@ky.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 11, 1999

Veteran Journalist Named Communications Director

FRANKFORT, Ky.- Insurance Commissioner George Nichols III announced today that he has named veteran journalist Roger Snell as the Department of Insurance's new director of communications, joining Jill Midkiff who continues as public information officer.

Snell, 39, served 17 years in newsrooms for the *Akron Beacon Journal*, *Columbus Dispatch* and for Gannett Co. Inc. newspapers in Ohio, Missouri and Kentucky, including most recently as assistant Kentucky editor for the *Kentucky Enquirer*, an edition of the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

Snell won more than a dozen regional and national awards during his career, primarily for investigative reporting. He was a staff member with the *Beacon Journal* when the newspaper won a Pulitzer Prize in the early 1990s and individually won the American Bar Association's top national journalism award in 1992 for "Justices for All?" - a series documenting ethical abuses on the Ohio Supreme Court. He also won several awards and national attention for exposing Columbus, Ohio, narcotics cops who owned crack houses, working with reporter Michael Berens, now an investigative reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*. Snell was bureau chief for almost a decade of his career in state capitals in Missouri and Ohio.

"We wanted someone who knows the media from the inside, understands state government and our important role as a regulator, and can help serve the public because of his experiences," Commissioner Nichols said. "In addition to his reporting experience, Roger also worked as a department manager for an insurance research company that was among the first to pursue evidence of life insurance coverage for ancestors of Holocaust victims."

Snell and his wife, Linda, have been married nearly 17 years and have two grade-school daughters. They have relocated from Florence to Frankfort.